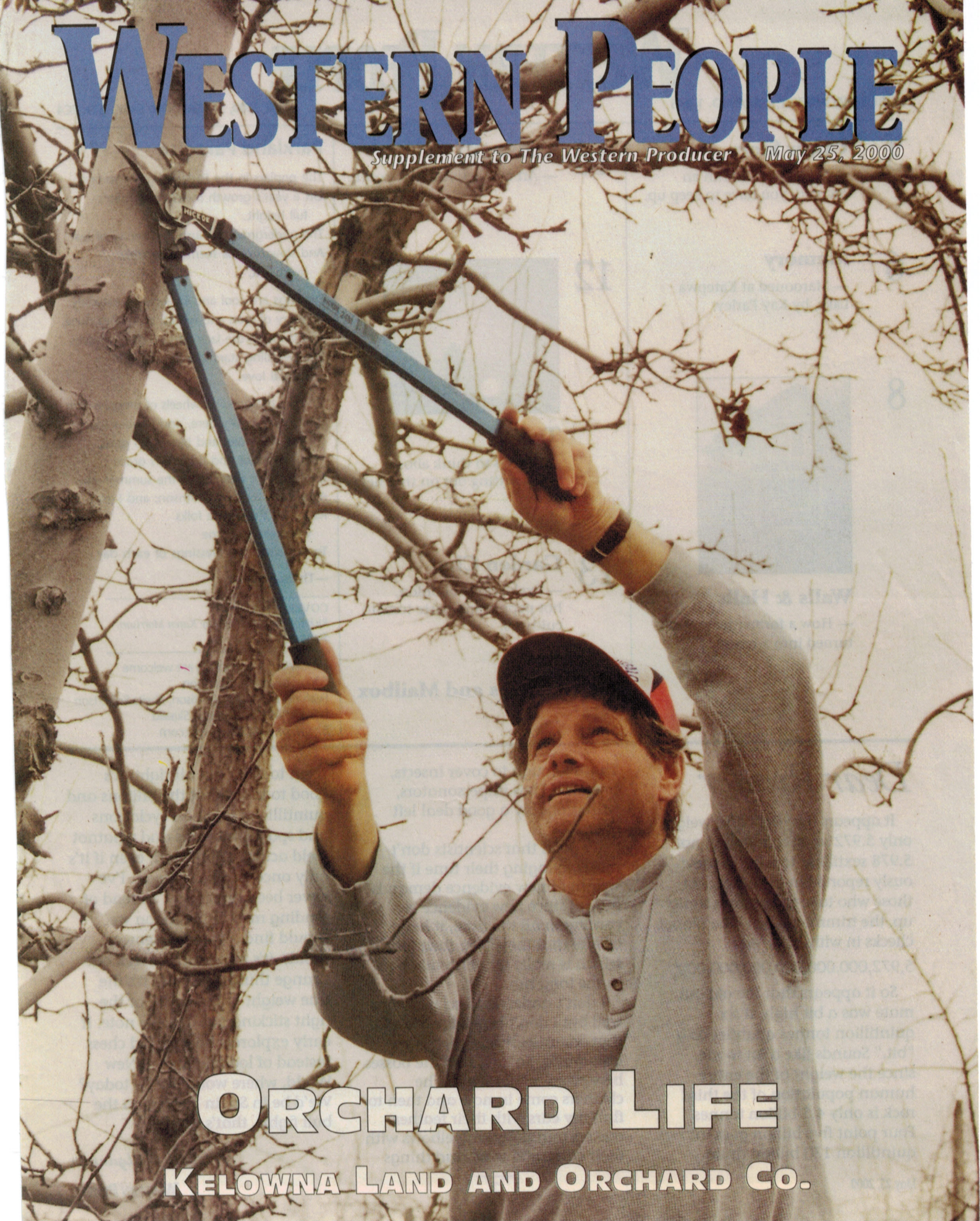


WESTERN PEOPLE

Supplement to The Western Producer May 25, 2000



ORCHARD LIFE

KELOWNA LAND AND ORCHARD CO.

WESTERN PEOPLE

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Parkland Paradise

The poplars in the Parkland grow so fast,
Of a year's growth measures a man's
full height.

The undergrowth is lush and broad of leaf
And slough grass seems to double
overnight.

Evenings are cool and sweet with katydids.
With cry of loon and wistful mourning dove,
And through the lacy pattern of the leaves
The twinkling stars look down with
special love.

Oh may the grinding wheels of progress turn
A bit more slowly here, and leave a space
For the shy violet and blue-eyed grass,
Wild bergamot and tiger lily's grace
For wild fruit ripening in the summer sun
All purple, blue and crimson; and I pray
Room for the gentle folks
who take the time
To savor the rich blessings of each day

—Thelma Foster

COVER PHOTO

Richard Bullock. Photo by Karen Morrison.
Story, page 3.

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Dear Reader

It appears that the Earth weighs only 5.972 sextillion tonnes, not 5.978 sextillion tonnes, as previously reported in textbooks. For those who take their zeroes straight up, the trimmed-down blue planet checks in with 18 of 'em:

5,972,000,000,000,000,000

So it appears that the old estimate was a bit high, if six quintillion tonnes qualifies as a "bit." Sounds like a lot to me, since the weight of the entire human population of the third rock is only 4.5 billion tonnes. Four point five billion goes into six quintillion 130 billion times.

That's enough to cover insects, trees and Elvis impersonators, with probably a good deal left over.

It's good that scientists don't mind changing their tune if the weight of new evidence demands it. And since new evidence is coming in all the time, it helps ensure that they keep their jobs, which is really what it's all about in the long run.

I don't understand science very well but I don't begrudge the fact that scientists live in their own little world. So do I, and the bosses here seem to tolerate it. The cleaners come in now and then to fluff my ears with their feather dusters and polish my elbows with their carnauba wax, and things

seem to work out all right. It's good to know that the billions and quintillions spent on cyclotrons and space programs and whatnot yield actual useful stuff, even if it's only once in a blue moon. I've never been one to say, instead of sending men to the moon we should find a cure for hemorrhoids. It's important to seek out strange things, whether it's the true weight of the Earth, or the right stickiness in a sticky note. If early explorers had played chess instead of looking for the New World, where would we be today? We'd be in Spain betting on the bull fights, that's where.

Michael Gillgannon

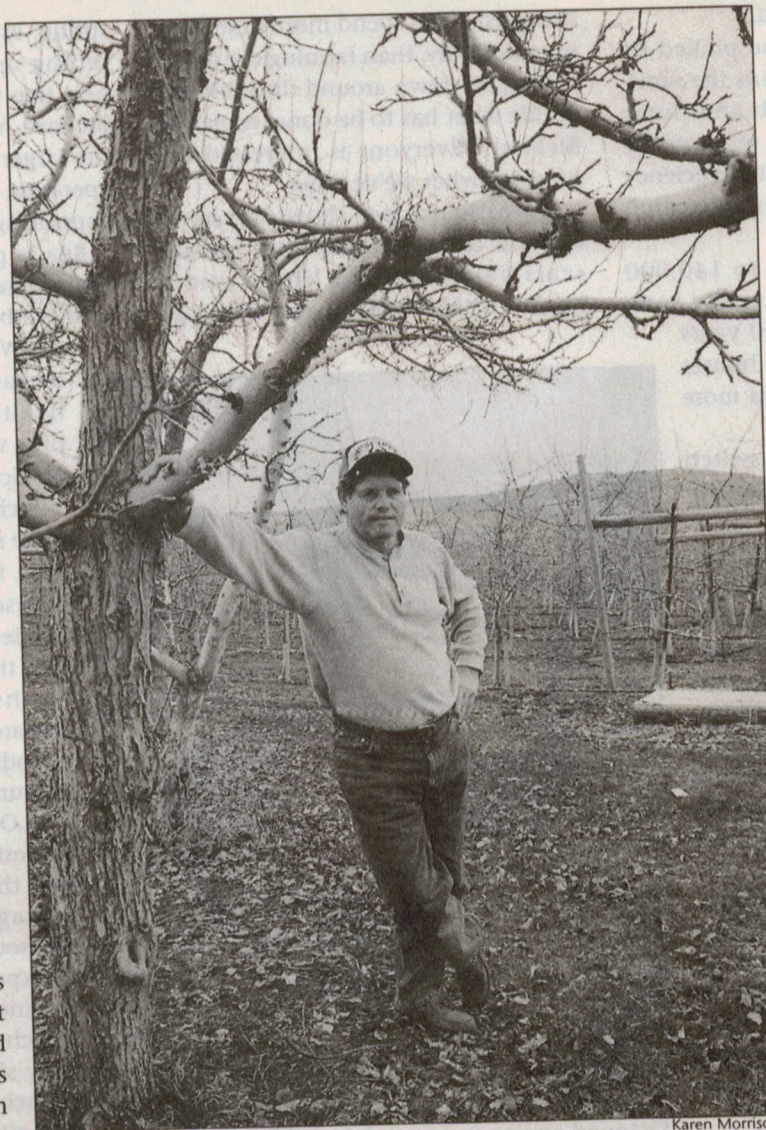
By Karen Morrison

The paved roads wind their way past subdivisions and strip malls, acreages and farms. At the bend in Dunster Road, behind a curtain of green junipers lies the Kelowna Land and Orchard Co., its narrow rows of short apple trees following the road as it trails on past the farm entrance.

John and Bertha (Bea) started the family farm, known locally as KLO, in 1943 and remain in a sprawling home overlooking Kelowna and the valley far below. Their first home, with its fresh coat of pink paint, looks like a tiny child's playhouse in the yard.

The urban sprawl of Kelowna, B.C. is kept at bay by a forest of trees and creek land on two sides donated for a city park by the senior Bullocks.

John and Bea, in their 70s now, are



Richard Bullock leans against an old-style apple tree. The new high-density orchard is behind him.

Not your father's orchard business

Like most things in this world, growing apples has changed greatly over the years.

close enough to watch over what goes on around the 140-acre family orchard but discreetly sheltered by trees and shrubs from the hordes daily at the store, petting zoo corrals and

new tea room.

The elders bought 12 acres in 1943 from Johnson Affleck, an English remittance man who had started the orchard in 1904 and was supported by family overseas. Their purchase grew to 60 acres by the time their sons Doug and Richard starting farming. They in turn added more land to the farm, which once was more than 200 acres.

Richard, 55, explained the region had been opened up to farming at the turn of the century with irrigation: "Without water, this is a desert."

Richard said the hot and dry summers in the

Okanagan made everything as barren as the grey-brown landscapes of distant hills. No more than 300 millimetres of rain falls here a year, lessening the impact of fruit diseases and making the

area an ideal growing area.

The fruit must still be picked by hand, but little else remains the same. Bea remembers the ditch and flume irrigation system being replaced by pipes, spraying without the efficiency of forced air systems and primitive fruit storage techniques.

Kelowna has shot up to 140,000 from the few thousand in the zone when they began. Just 20 years ago, there were only three houses on their road; now it looks more like a city street.

Most noticeable is the switch from big to small, high-density trees, she said.

KLO, a name also identifying a street and campus in Kelowna, referred to a group of investors who bought and sold land including the Affleck parcel. John starting working here in the 1930s, later marrying and buying this orchard. By then, KLO was long inactive, so the couple took over that enterprise and adopted the name for their new home.

Richard, with his wife Jacquie, and their children Nicole, 31 and John, 30, have taken over much of the day-to-day operations. Nicole handles the agri-tourism end, stocking the store with crafts, and booking the tours, while John is the hands-on orchardist.

More a people person than her brother, Nicole describes John as a "natural" in the orchard. "He loves trees," she said.

Richard keeps a hand in but is active off-farm, with an appointment to the B.C. Marketing Board and past involvements with B.C. fruit grower groups and the Canadian Horticultural Council. Jacquie contributes home crafts to the store and works off-farm in crop insurance.

Richard's sister Nancy plans to take over one of the family's orchards. Her family's former home, part of the store at KLO, was renovated this spring for a tea room. Brother Doug runs a ginseng operation at Rock Creek, B.C.

It's a family business so there are inherent conflicts, explained Richard.

Wedge between the "second guessing" of the elders and "letting [his kids] make some of their own mistakes," he

shrugged, "You spend more time farming the family, than farming the farm."

They sit down around the table and decide what has to be done, explained Richard. "Everyone is interested and proud of what we've done."

A weathered face shows the hours Richard has spent outdoors, but the scars detail another life in junior hockey with the Edmonton Oil Kings.



Tattooed apples and fresh juice add value to the business.

He went on to obtain a degree in business administration at Simon Fraser University and to operate a food export business in Vancouver called Pacific Rim Foods.

Doug shared Richard's interest in hockey, while Nancy was the equestrian.

KLO employs five full-time employees, mainly local families who have worked here for years. That number swells to 70 in busier times in the shop, the u-pick operation in the fall and in picking, packing and processing fruit. About 20,000 people annually tour the orchard's peaches, pears, cherries, plums and 10 varieties of apples.

Winter is a quieter time here, but there is still steady work in pruning trees. Their most hectic time comes in

spring, especially May and June, with setting up the store. They also plant new tree varieties in the high-density orchard, which is slowly displacing the larger old-style trees. "The whole operation is waking up and things are happening very quickly," Richard said.

Bea is poetic about the magic of springtime here, calling the fruit flow-ers a symbol of rebirth of the farm.

"When you walk through an orchard with blossoms on at even-tide it has to be just the most beautiful, wonderful walk you can take on God's earth," she said.

Richard is trying to keep things more natural in the orchards these days. He has introduced an insect release program that introduces sterile (non-reproducing) moths into the hordes of wild codling moths. Long an enemy of orchardists, they were accidentally introduced here from Europe at the turn of the century.

KLO volunteered to be one of the testing sites to determine how well the moth problem is being managed through a variety of methods. They also are involved in experiments in fruit coloring and increasing apple growth.

Richard keeps his business plan fairly simple too. "If you have to finance it doesn't make sense," he said, citing the high land prices in the Okanagan.

His advice is to "stay ahead of the curve" by diversifying and planting new varieties to meet changing tastes.

"I tell my son you have to do everything that you can control as well as you possibly can, as either Mother Nature or the market will kick the crap out of you somewhere along the line."

He and Jacquie have travelled extensively to study what others are doing and to gather new ideas for the orchard business. "We came to the conclusion that farming in the valley had to take dramatic steps in farming or we're finished," he said. "We have to try new things or else we might as well cash out and clip coupons."

The million dollars worth of changes to create a high-density orchard were a tough sell for John and Bea.

"Mother had the vision, he had the strong back," said Richard. "I have a

Karen Morrison

strong back and a little bit of vision."

Nicole said her grandfather is from a different time, an era of big trees and cans of DDT, a time before orchards had their own websites.

"Grandfather doesn't understand what's going on, but he's liberal enough to see that change is good," said Nicole.

Bea said it's very hard economically to justify being in one source of income anymore: "Never does anything stand still; we have to keep changing."

Nicole agreed KLO's future depends on the farm changing and expanding as markets change. Change is inevitable, she said: "We're just trying to stay ahead."

Richard explained orchards are like most other businesses: "If you don't keep moving ahead, you're dying."

He laments the fact that there are a number of million-dollar homes sitting on prime agricultural land that will never return to food production. Urban encroachment onto farmland is a serious concern in the Okanagan, and he admits their foray into agri-tourism also brings the city to the farm, with upwards of 600 busloads a season.

"Most neighbors understand in order to stay in business we have to find a way to add value," said Richard. Nicole added: "Most who grumble are those who haven't had the foresight to really replant orchards and are stuck in a time warp."

The Bullocks hope the spinoff of the tours, which run around \$5 for adults, is in educating non-farmers about how food is produced. The working farm tour also provides an alternative from the current Okanagan fad in winery tours, said Nicole.

Richard uses some ideas from his travels to attract the curious.

He grows the "perfect apple" and tattoos apples, accomplished by wrapping the golf-ball sized apples in layered bags on the trees early in the growing season. The goal is an unblemished "pink" apple that is highly valued in overseas markets.

Tattooed apples are a novelty item that they do on contract to buyers. Returns are good but the workload is enormous, with one person able to bag about 2,000 apples a day.

Apples on the tree are covered in layered bags, which come off in stages. A tissue paper liner comes off last, allowing the apples to color up evenly. Mylar logos are placed on the apples when the



Karen Morrison

Bea and John's home on the farm, before the kids came.

bags are removed, then peeled off at harvest to reveal the sun-baked image on the apple. "It keeps people talking about us," said Richard, shaking his head. "It's good but you've got to be a little goofy to do it."

He has toured extensively to show others the techniques. He makes his money, from owning the rights to distributing the bags to other orchardists.

His Fuji apples sell for 30 to 35 cents a pound, bagged ones for 80 cents, while the ones with logos pay out at up to \$2.50 each.

The orchard's gross sales total around \$1.5 million, with the four million pounds of apples produced here placing it among the largest orchards in the region.

Additional revenues come from the store and tours so it's a good living for the family.

KLO is much more than just a business to the Bullocks, said Bea: "If I won a million dollars this morning, I probably would still carry on farming. We love our farm."



John Bullock, with sprayer, prepares to blast insects in the 1940s.

MAROONED



On the hills above Katepwa Lake, 1932: Grant and Gordon Durnin, Helen Beatty and Kay Parley.

Memory by Kay Parley

Nobody had heard of seatbelts in 1932. As we came over the brow of the hill, my young cousins were standing at the car windows, jostling for the best position to catch a glimpse of Katepwa Lake. The moment it came into view, five-year-old Gordon announced excitedly that the most water he'd ever seen before was in a bucket. I tried to look sophisticated, because I had seen Katepwa. I was nine.

We were all tired from the crowding and jolting, but spirits revived as we wound down the hill to Indian Head Beach. Great Uncle Al Dyer had built a cottage there when he was a dentist at Indian Head. Now it belonged to his brother-in-law, but my mother and Aunt Erma had arranged to use it for a week. A holiday at the lake was a rare treat in those days.

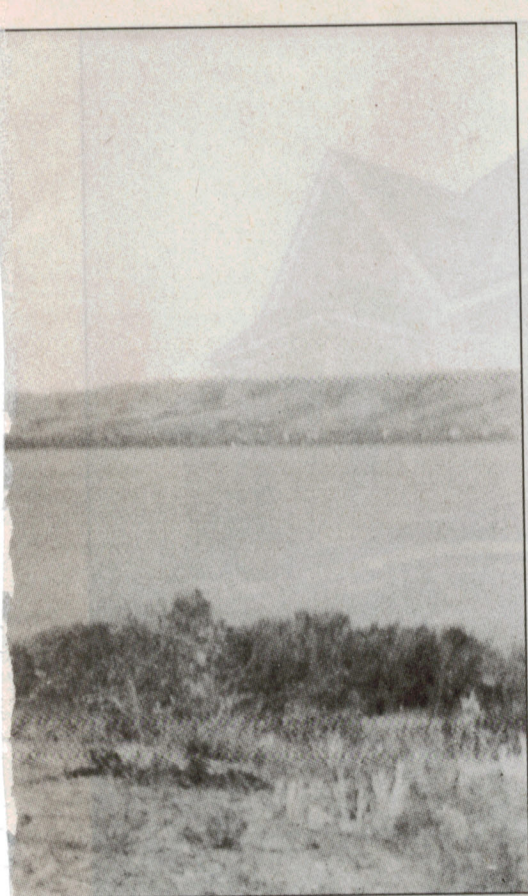
"They called it 'EEEE — four e's," my mother was explaining. "You know — 'For Ease.'"

I found that interesting but I don't think the boys cared. The second Uncle Gard stopped the car, they broke loose, racing around the cottage and shouting for their bathing trunks.

The cottage was a bare boards affair. Nobody insulated houses in 1932, let alone a cottage. It had a deck-like stoop and a well. No where at Katepwa would one find lawns or gardens, alien trees, fences, electricity or water taps. We were supposed to be symbiotic with Nature there.

My aunt set about trying to herd the boys while their cousin Helen, a year or so older than I and officially Erma's aide-de-camp for the summer, got their bundle out of the car so they could have their suits. My mother alit with her purse in hand and ordered me to get my little satchel. Then she extracted her suitcase and Erma's. We had ridden all the way with our feet on those. The box of food was in the trunk, but there hadn't been room for anything else back there.

"Have you got everything, Merle?" asked Uncle Gard, who hadn't moved from behind the wheel. I don't believe he was very enthusiastic about bringing us down that day, and



he could see no reason why two women and four healthy kids couldn't unload without him.

"Yes," said Mother, thinking he was asking if she had her things.

With that, Gard started the car and drove off. For a second we stood astonished. Erma had just rejoined us and she and Mother began to run after the car, waving and shouting. Apparently Gard thought we were waving goodbye, because he kept right on going, and all of our food went with him.

Auntie Erma, who never failed to see the funny side, began to laugh.

"This is no laughing matter, Erm," said Mother, who was 12 years older than her sister. "We're marooned."

But Erma's laughter was very catching, so Mother began to laugh also. Being marooned at the lake was a common enough occurrence in the Twenties and Thirties. All it took was a sprinkling of rain and cars couldn't climb the hills. It was just that we hadn't expected it so soon.

In the midst of it, Helen was shouting for Erma and she and Grant, aged seven, were hauling a spluttering and

dripping Gordon out of the lake. "Gordie drowned," Grant announced proudly. Gordon, intoxicated at the sight of so much water, had waded straight in over his head. From that moment, we couldn't entice him into the lake.

When we had settled a little from this second crisis, Mother set about inspecting the cupboards in the cottage and found a package of pancake flour. We did not have many options. We had no boat. There was no one in the cottage next door. We had no telephone.

Grant studied the prospects and announced there were plenty of ducks. The ducks were chiefly gulls but, had they been ducks, we had no way of shooting or catching them.

Grant then announced he would build a raft and go fishing. It was obvious that, as the oldest male, he saw himself in the role of hunter-breadwinner for the party. Gordon may have been envious of this, because he contemplated the idea of his brother sailing a raft out to the middle of Katepwa Lake and asked pointedly, "How are you going to get back, Grantie? Or will you stay out there all night in the dark while the rest of us are asleep?" Already Gordon had a husky and colorful voice that he could use with deadly sarcasm. Grant gave up on the raft.

We had passed a farm about a mile from the top of the hill. If worse came to worst, it was decided, we would walk up there and try to buy eggs and potatoes. In the meantime, Helen and I were put to work picking all the pigweed we could find and plucking off the tiny leaves. It took hours, but there would be passable greens for supper. Erma and Mother took the boys and went searching for ripe saskatoons for dessert.

Salad, of course, would be dandelion greens, and there would be pancakes made with water. Next morning, breakfast consisted of pancakes with sugar-

less saskatoon syrup.

It was obvious we were going to have to appeal for help, but the fact that we didn't know any of the neighbors was a deterrent. Mother's family had been raised on a strict code of decorum. The words, "But we don't know them," were enough to keep them from approaching strangers.

Mother could organize her way out of anything and Erma could see the funny side and take it in stride, but the simple business of asking for help was almost too much for them.

"How are we going to explain this fix?" Mother wanted to know. It did make us look pretty silly.

In the midst of the discussion, Grant burst in to tell us people had arrived at the cottage next door and they had a boat. Could he ask them for a ride?

Hunger is a strong motivator. Mother grabbed her purse. "We're not asking for any boat rides," she announced, "but if by any chance they're going across to the store. . . ."

The little store at Katepwa Beach kept only a small stock, but we did get some supplies: bread and milk and tinned

salmon, some oranges, eggs and half a dozen cans of soup.

We survived our wilderness experience with ease. We went on nature hikes. Mother, who had been a school teacher, taught us the correct way to strip birchbark without harming the trees. Then, on the inevitable rainy day, she sat us down to crafts. We picked berries and flowers. Best of all, we climbed the Qu'Appelle Hills and enjoyed the scenery. We ate an awful lot of pancakes.

When Uncle Gard arrived to retrieve us at the end of our week, the food supplies were still in the trunk of his car. About the only thing that had not spoiled in the summer heat was the pancake flour. ■

(Writer Kay Parley, a former teacher, artist and nurse, writes from Saskatoon.)

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BREADWINNER
FOR THE PARTY.*

Walls & halls

Turning a rectory into a house involved a big commitment of time, money and sweat.

By Linda Wegner

A brick cornerstone, found under the front steps along with a lot of old crockery and a potato masher, reads "Notre Dame de La Salette AD 1904." Above the lettering is a cross, a symbol of the reason for the building of a massive structure in what was once the thriving community of Forget, Sask.

One hundred years ago, the La Salette fathers came from France to establish the parish that served the town and surrounding areas. In its glory days, Forget was a major centre in southeastern Saskatchewan and it was from here that priests would travel, ministering to the congregations scattered throughout the countryside. The huge rectory accommodated several Roman Catholic priests at one time.

The years have taken their toll on

both the community and the rectory. Forget is now home to just a handful of people and eight years ago the rectory was closed.

It took one family's interest, skill, and money to transform the priests' residence into a family home.

Randy and Marlene Shaver, along with four of their eight children made the move from Lethbridge, Alta. to Forget in April 1998.

"We always wanted an older house to fix up and restore and we also wanted a place that had beautiful trees and grounds," Randy said. "I was raised on a place like this."

For Randy, the "place like this" was his home north of the Big Muddy, close to Bengough. Marlene was raised on a farm south of a town named Amulet between Weyburn and Assiniboia.

Besides having a profound interest in the house, they wanted to be closer to

parents and family still living in the area.

Randy said their search for a property like the rectory took "years and years . . . we searched all over B.C. and Alberta."

At first, there was no power or water. They realized that the ideal situation would have been to work on the house while living elsewhere.

"We had four children and four cats so you try and rent something. It was impossible. We needed a place to stay but as it was, we just had to move in."

Armed with a new blueprint drawn up by Marlene, the huge task began. The first goal, getting the power connected, was accomplished within a few days. "All the electrical wiring was haywire," Randy said. "It had been patched so we completely redid all the electrical system and put in all new wiring."

Power restored, the next project was new plumbing. Randy's son, a plumber,



came out from Lethbridge and redid it all. Three bathrooms were added, making five in all.

They began working, section by section, while the family camped in another part of the house. The couple recalled how they were always moving around.

"Our living room shifted to three or four different places at least," Marlene said. "We were always moving stuff."

"We started from the bottom up," Randy explained, noting the main beam had sagged. There had been a lot of moisture in the basement and it had rotted out the posts.

They also had to restore the front verandah, which was "literally coming off the wall."

While their original plans were to tear out all the inside walls in order to insulate the building, the discovery that the walls were 13 inches thick and well insulated just by air spaces made them change their minds.

"I've never seen construction like that," Randy said. "I'm an architect and I've never seen anything like it."

Construction "like that" involved not only the massive 13-inch thick upper walls but 24-inch concrete bottom walls.

Exterior walls were made with "real brick and no insulation."

"In most ways, it really worked out good," he said. "It wasn't bad to heat at all." Heating costs have averaged \$151 a month.

The basement had all been partitioned off. There were bedrooms down there and it had all been finished. There were beautiful big baseboards and wood floors but because it hadn't been looked after, moisture had got in and they had to strip it out.

The renovation involved more than a year of Randy and Marlene's life, a lot of volunteer and hired help and approximately \$60,000 in materials.

"When people came to church they saw the beautiful side of the rectory," said Randy. "The back side was more or

less the service side and servants' quarters. That part of the house is very plain."

The front featured a 50-foot wrap-around verandah, and balconies, enhanced by graceful curves and angles.

The original cost of this house was \$10,000 — a large amount of money in 1904.

"I've seen many wood frame houses — big, beautiful wood frame houses — that cost \$2,000," said Randy.

"Something else that's really interesting about having this place is that a lot of the sisters working in the academy [St. Joseph's Convent] never saw the inside of this house," Randy

grounds," Marlene said.

"We don't push it but if someone is wandering around, we will offer to show them the house. Most people really want to see the house."

What they see is even more impressive than the elegant exterior.

Entering the building and to the left, a small room with its curved outside wall served as the original chapel. Across the hall, another room which was used as an office, still fulfills that function.

"Two rooms had been joined," Randy explained.

A partition was reinstalled and the second room, instead of serving as a second office, is now a kitchen. A tiny nook, tucked under the window, invites quiet introspection.

The house was built in 1904, with alterations made in 1910. "After that it didn't seem that there were any changes because [there's only one] place you see where the floor was altered."

Beautiful winding staircases, maids-quarters, bedrooms complete with original wooden chairs, and picture-railings from 1904, retain their appeal.

Off the third and fourth levels, balconies offer a breathtaking view of the countryside as far

as the town of Stoughton to the west and the Moose Mountains to the east. Passages behind passages, hallways that divide into yet more hallways and dormer windows facing three directions enhance the mystique and beauty of this former home of parish priests.

In 1999, members of the Forget congregation hosted approximately 900 people for the 100th anniversary of the parish. More than 300 of them took the opportunity to tour the old rectory.

The Shavers have now returned to Alberta and the rectory has been sold to people hoping to use it as an artists' retreat.

"It's been fun to have had a place like this; I have no regrets at all," said Randy. "Now that I've done it, it's out of my system."



Randy Shaver holds the cornerstone of the rectory/house. It says "Notre Dame de La Salette AD 1904."

explained. "People who lived right in this town—some right next door—never saw this house because you didn't go to the priest and say, 'Oh, I want to look at your house,' it just wasn't something you did. We've had all kinds of people come now that they know the house is open to see. Or they'll phone and ask if we mind."

Hundreds took advantage of the Shavers' willingness to open their home. More than 600 have signed the guest book, Randy said.

A sign on the highway indicating the shrine of Our Lady of LaSalette drew visitors in as well.

"There are people who have never ever been in this town but because of the shrine they will come in, look at the church and wander around the



KiDBITS

News for youths

Girl-power drain

Girl power is growing for sure, but girls say they still struggle with stereotypes. The well-known Harris pollsters, along with a girls' rights group called Girls Inc., recently interviewed more than 1,000 girls in grades 3-12. Here's some of what they found: 59 percent said girls are told not to brag about things they do well; 63 percent said they're under lots of pressure to please everyone; 65 percent said girls are expected to spend lots of time doing housework and taking care of younger sibs; and 62 percent said that in school, boys think they have the right to discuss girls' bodies in public. Is that how you see it, girls (and guys)? — KRT

Get in the 'Girl Zone'

If you're tired of teen magazines that cover boys, celebs and beauty but not much in between, check out Girl Zone at www.girlzone.com.

This fab online 'zine talks about real-life issues. Start by exploring your physical side at Bodyopolis, where you'll find articles on sports, cooking, fashion and health. Or delve into the Inner City where you can reveal your creative side. Around Town is where you'll discover volunteer opportunities or read up on real-girl travels.

We immediately zoned into Ask Miss Knowbody (she answers embarrassing questions about the body), and the real-girl book reviews. But there's plenty more. In fact, Girl Zone's boundaries are as boundless as girls' opinions. — KRT

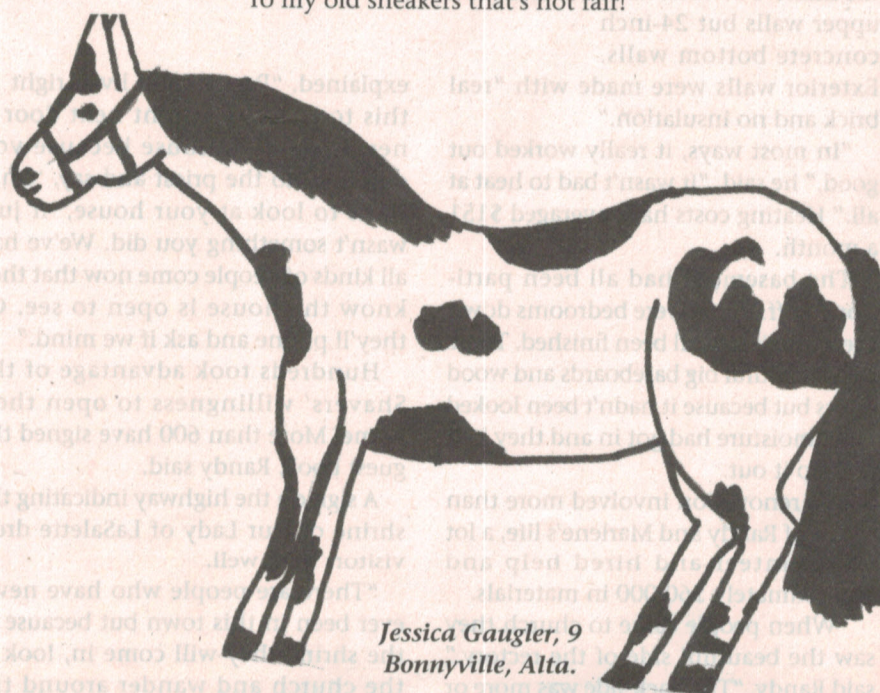
Landon Seitz, 10
Kendal, Sask.



Sneakers

Kanesa Shwetz, 10
Waskatenau, Alta.

They're all grimy,
With dirt so slimy,
They step on stones
That would break your bones,
They're always around
When outside you want to bound,
You can't wear them in school,
But outside they're a great tool.
So when your mom says, "Let's buy a new pair,"
Say "NO!"
To my old sneakers that's not fair!



Jessica Gaugler, 9
Bonnyville, Alta.

Drop us a note online! Send your
e-mail to kidspin@producer.com today!



The Kids' Help Phone is free, it's confidential, and it's 24
hours a day. A friend is always on the other end of the line.

1-800-668-6868

Meet Ben Webb, teen magician

By Pat Rediger

He received his first magic kit at age four, did his first paying show at nine, and now that he's 18, he's hoping to become a full-time magician. Ben Webb of Moose Jaw, Sask., can make cards disappear and then reappear, read minds and make a candle appear out of thin air, to name just a few of his tricks.

"After my father bought me a magic kit for my birthday I was bit by the magic bug," he said. It was a Houdini magic kit that included a number of rope tying tricks and a variety of plastic gadgets.

It didn't him long to master the tricks. He then began reading books and watching television shows about magic.

Webb convinced his father, Brian, to let him take magic lessons after showing his father some tricks he had learned on his own. "On the television show, the magician made a sponge ball jump from one hand to the other. I asked my dad for a penny and made it jump from my hand to my dad's hand. I just figured out how the trick worked."

When Webb posted a message on a local computerized bulletin board service, promoting himself as a magician for hire, the bulletin board manager responded. He was interested in having Webb put on a show for his wife.



Pat Rediger photo

Webb, then a \$10-an-hour magician, developed a custom-built box in which a birthday present appeared out of nowhere. He also set a pan on fire and after it was put out, a birthday cake materialized.

"That first show went well," said Webb. "The father-in-law at the party examined the box and he couldn't find out the secret of how I made the birthday gift appear."

It wasn't long before word of mouth about Webb's skills spread throughout the community. He now does a couple of hundred shows a year and has entertained crowds as large as 600 people.

He said the key element of his success is providing entertainment. He realizes that even a technically perfect magician can flop if he can't keep the audience amused and awed.

Webb hopes to attend magic conferences to learn more tricks and continues to practice daily. Sleight of hand, for example, takes considerable dexterity, so he practises to make it look as natural as possible. Things still go a little wonky sometimes.

"Once there was a time that I dropped something and the secret was exposed, but I tried to make a passable explanation of what happened and then I moved on. You just have to go with the flow."

Make a coin disappear

The "Drop Vanish" trick involves one fluid movement to make a coin seem like it is in the hand where it isn't.

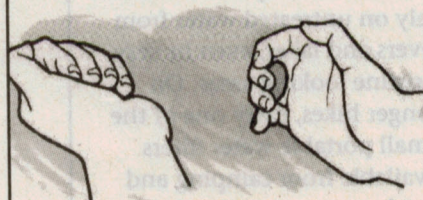
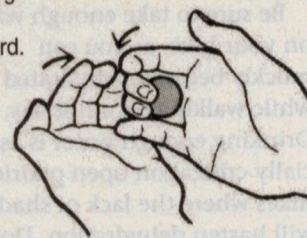
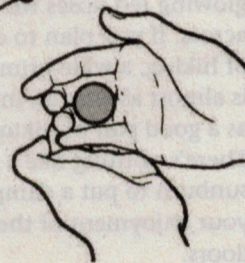
In your right hand hold a coin by its edges, between the thumb and index finger. Relax your thumb, letting the coin fall.



As you relax your thumb, tilt your right hand slightly forward so that the coin falls into your right hand fingers, instead of your left hand.



Curl your right-hand fingers inward to palm the coin while closing your left hand and moving it down and forward.



SURF ALERT Check out this site:
www.thecase.com/kids/magic/
— it's full of magic tricks, just for kids!

KRT graphic

HIKER'S CREED: BE PREPARED

By Robin and Arlene Karpan

The summer hiking season is now in full swing, with a wide array of walking trails beckoning us to get out and explore the outdoors. Before hitting the trails, a few simple precautions will go a long way in ensuring that we have a safe and enjoyable outing.

The Prairies have more sunshine than anywhere else in Canada, so wearing a hat and using sunscreen are especially important here. While this precaution might seem obvious, it is one that is often overlooked, judging by the number of people with red foreheads and glowing red noses we come across. If you plan to do a lot of hiking, a wide-brimmed hat is almost as wise an investment as a good pair of hiking boots. There's nothing like a painful sunburn to put a damper on your enjoyment of the outdoors.

Be sure to take enough water on your hike, as you can quickly become dehydrated while walking on a hot day. Drinking enough water is especially critical on open prairie hikes where the lack of shade will hasten dehydration. Don't rely on untreated water from rivers and lakes, even in very pristine looking areas. On longer hikes, carry one of the small portable water filters available from camping and outdoor stores.

If you plan to hike in the north or in the mountains, you need to be bear aware. Bears will likely try to avoid

you if they see, smell or hear you coming. A simple precaution to avoid surprising a bear is to make enough noise while you are walking. Many hikers attach small bells to their backpacks. Be especially careful if you come across food sources for bears, such as berry patches or a dead animal. Bears may aggressively protect their food

supply if they feel it is threatened. Of course, there should be no food in or anywhere near your tent. Dogs should not be taken on wilderness trails, as they may infuriate a bear enough to attack.

Among the nastiest critters are ticks — blood-sucking parasites that attach themselves to your clothing as you walk through shrubs or tall grasses. You are most likely to encounter them in southern parts of the Prairies. Precautions to take against ticks include applying an insect repellent, wearing light-colored clothing, tucking your pant legs into your socks, and checking your clothing and body carefully after walking through grass. Ticks are most numerous from early spring to mid-summer.

Mosquitoes can be an annoyance anytime during the summer. You'll likely notice them more along forested trails sheltered from the wind. As a general rule, mosquitoes are most voracious in June and early July, then become less of a problem in late summer. Black flies are most common in the north and, here too, they are worse in early summer. We consider bug repellent almost a

necessity in enjoying the outdoors, particularly in the north. Wearing long pants and long sleeves helps deter the pests. While mosquito bites tend to be a passing irritation, black fly bites can swell and itch for several days.

In the Prairies and parklands, stinging nettle is a common but potentially nasty plant. The plant is covered in tiny hairs that inject formic acid into your skin if you rub against it, causing itching and burning that could last anywhere from a few minutes to a few days. The best protection is to wear long pants and long sleeves.

Poison ivy is a low plant with leaves in threes and white berries. It contains oils that cause skin irritation, and possibly blisters or a rash if you brush up against any part of it. If you know you've touched poison ivy, wash with soap and water right away. Protect yourself by wearing long pants and avoiding areas off the path where you see poison ivy growing.

Perhaps the most important precaution is to let someone know where you'll be hiking, especially if you're going alone. Even a four- or five-kilometre walk will seem like a long way if you slip and sprain an ankle. Some trails are not well used so you never know how long it will be before someone comes by. For a longer back country hike, leave someone a copy of a map indicating the route you'll be taking and potential campsites. ■■



**Nut Point trail,
La Ronge, Sask.**

GET 'EM WHILE THEY'RE HOT

By Sara Williams

If you're a salsa lover or a fan of Mexican cuisine, take note of the results of the 1999 University of Saskatchewan warm season vegetable trials. They evaluated onion, hot pepper and paste tomato cultivars (along with watermelon to cool you off afterwards!)

The most highly rated early yellow onion cultivars were Barrage, Norstar, Nice Pak and Wolf. All of these produced average to good yields with Barrage and Wolf producing the most consistent yields.

Later maturing yellow cultivars with excellent yields included Yula, Frontier and First Edition. Candy, Spectrum and Copra were recommended as good yielding main season yellow cultivars. (For gardeners with a fixation on size, Candy, First Edition and Yula produced the high number of colossal-sized bulbs!)

Late season yellow onions with good yields included Festival, Hercules, Prince, Teton and Uniglobe (with Prince noted for a large number of colossal bulbs.)

Red Beauty proved to be the earliest red onion with good yields. Mars and Red Eyes were not quite as early but had high yields, with Mars producing a large number of colossal bulbs.

Clara was the best early white onion tested in 1999, with good yields and a high number of double bulbs. Nevada is a later white cultivar with fewer doubles and similar yields.

Onions grown in 1998 were tested for their storage ability during the winter of 1998-99. They were stored at 0°C and 70 percent relative humidity for eight months.

The best yellow onions were Prince, Yellow Globe Danvers, Torque, Copra, Cavalier, and Cannon. (Torque and Yellow Globe Danvers were also

among the onions recommended in 1998 for their high yields.) Red Burger-master was the only red cultivar that exhibited excellent storage. None of the Spanish or white cultivars tested are recommended for storage.

A whopping 39 paste tomatoes cultivars were tested during the 1999 growing season, but very few of these produced a significant number of red fruit. They were evaluated for earliness (based on red fruit production), mar-

ketable green yield, fruit size and quality.

Elko was the earliest maturing cultivar with excellent green marketable yields. Monix, La Rossa and Mama Mia are recommended as early cultivars with good green marketable yields. Spectrum 882 had excellent marketable green yields but smaller fruit and was not as early as the other recommended cultivars.

Hot peppers were also tested. Despite the cool, wet growing conditions of 1999, most of the cultivars produced marketable crops (probably due to the fact that they were grown under field covers.)

Super Jumbo, a banana-type pepper, was recommended for its good yields. White Fire was the hottest banana-type pepper

tested. Golden Cayenne and Ring of Fire, cayenne-type peppers, were recommended for their excellent heat and good yields. Yellow Midway, also a cayenne pepper, had excellent yields. Cherry Bomb, a cherry type pepper, was recommended for its mild flavor and excellent yields.

Of the chili peppers, Chile Grande had the best taste and yield combination. Crimson Hot, Elegant Red and Super Hungarian Hot are cubanelle-type peppers recommended for their good flavor. Of the three, Crimson Hot had the best yields.

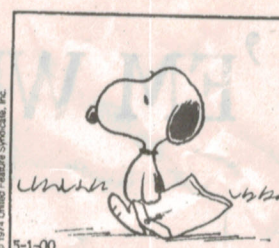
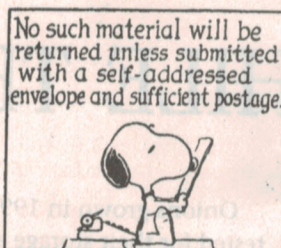
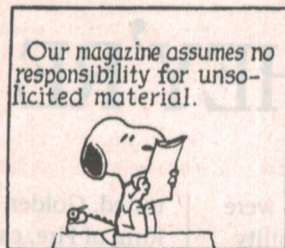
Most of the jalapeno-type peppers that were tested performed well in the trial. Cultivars recommended for their flavor include Mucho nacho, Tampico Fiesta, Serrano Maximo and Summer Heat Brand Variety 5000. Delicias was recommended for its good yields and excellent sweet taste.

Of the 69 watermelon cultivars tested, only 30 percent produced marketable fruit. Ace King, Country Home, South Crimson, and Festival topped the list as early maturing cultivars with excellent flavor. Crimson Early had excellent yields with good flavor. Ace Phoenix, a nearly yellow fleshed cultivar, had good yields and flavor. ■

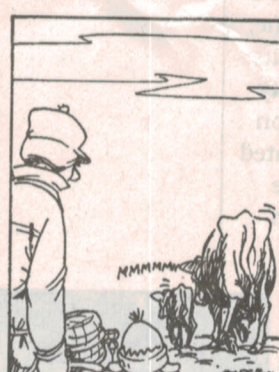


**It's nice to have
melons around
to balance off
the heat of
onions, peppers
and paste
tomatoes.**

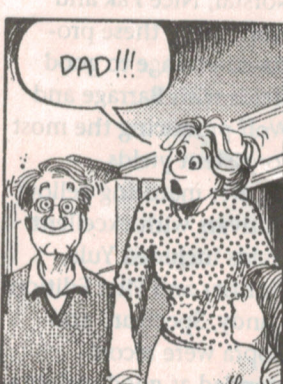
PEANUTS Classics



RURAL ROOTZ



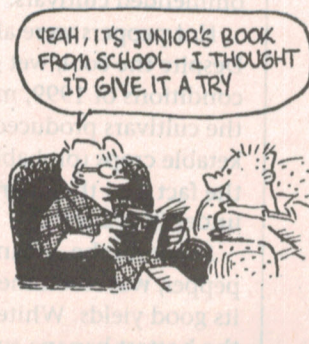
For BETTER or for WORSE



GARFIELD

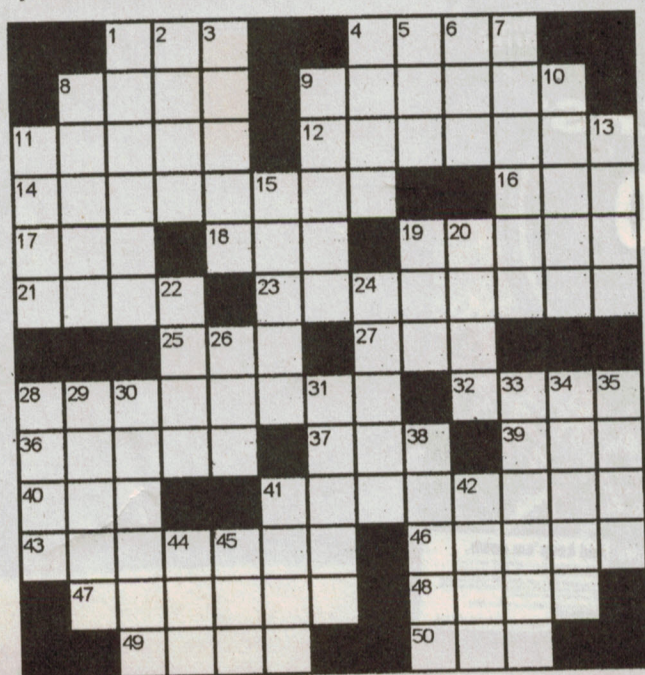


BETTY



Canadian Criss Cross

by Walter D. Feener



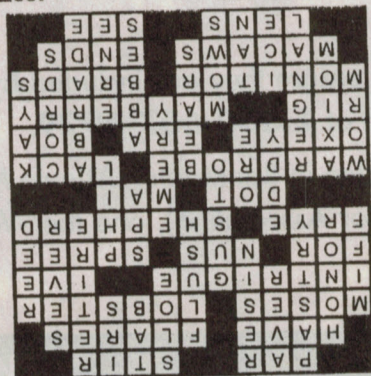
ACROSS

1. Accepted standard
4. Prison: slang
8. Suffer from
9. Distress signals
11. Joshua's predecessor
12. Seafood delicacy
14. Secret plot
16. "___ Got a Secret"
17. In place of
18. Greek letters
19. Money squandering spell
21. Canadian literary critic
23. Sheep caretaker
25. Orthographical mark
27. It comes after Avril
28. Collection of clothes
32. Be without
36. Daisy
37. Generation
39. Fluffy scarf
40. Equipage
41. Andy Griffith's home
43. Observe over time
46. Thin wire nails
47. Showy parrots

DOWN

1. Fancy baked goods
2. Affirm
3. Varnish ingredient
4. Blackthorn
5. Check
6. Tax-collecting agency
7. Leave employment, because of age
8. High respect
9. Poker hand
10. Break off
11. Trivial quarrel
13. Wind instrument
15. Zest

19. Health club area
20. Marlo's husband
22. MacDonald's partner
24. Hard abrasive powder
26. Valuable mineral
28. Legless invertebrate
29. Self-evident truth
30. Of a king
31. Tolerates
33. Wear away
34. Measures of cut wood
35. 11th letters
38. French clerics
41. Uses a scythe
42. Sea eagle
44. Frozen water
45. Change hide into leather



MAILBOX

Listings are free but only run once. Please be brief. Issues are prepared three weeks in advance of publication date. Send info to: Mailbox, Western People, Box 2500, Saskatoon S7K 2C4.

Leroy School reunion 1960-1990, July 1-2, 2000. Please accept this notice as your invitation. Contact: Students call Sherry, 306-366-4871; teachers call Shonnie, 306-287-3918. See you there!

Trying to find teachers and students that attended Hamilton School #2004 to help celebrate "Millennium Celebration" at Imperial, Sask., June 17-18, 2000. Phone 306-963-2036 or 963-2246, or Box 192, Imperial, Sask. SOG 2JO

Reimer and Marsch family reunion for descendants of Emil Marsch and Stanislaus Reime, August 4-6, 2000. A chance to meet long lost relatives. Write: B. Reimer, 714 - 4th Ave. N.W., Swift Current, Sask. S9H 0W1, 306-773-2141.

Sceptre/Lemsford reunion homecoming, June 30-July 2, 2000. If you plan to attend or want more information contact Gordon Dunn, Box 102, Sceptre, Sask., 306-623-4380. This is your invitation.

North Bend-Albion School reunion, Aug. 4-6, North Bend Hall. Former teachers, students and area residents are welcome. For more information, contact: Lynne, 306-825-2754, Marg, 306-825-3223 or Ian, 306-825-2533.

Hines Creek 70th anniversary, homecoming, all school's reunion, Aug. 4-6, 2000. Inviting all residents and students from the following districts: Hines Creek, (former Calaghan) Chester, David Thompson, Deer Hill, Ednam, Hinterland, Hillandale, Lubeck, Melody, Montagneuse Valley, Peace Grove, Royce. Contact: Lynette, 780-494-3836 (day) or 780-494-2183 (evening) or submit a \$10 registration-confirmation fee (includes a souvenir package, wine and cheese and a breakfast) to: Hines Creek Millennium Homecoming, Box 686, Hines Creek, Alta. T0H 2A0.

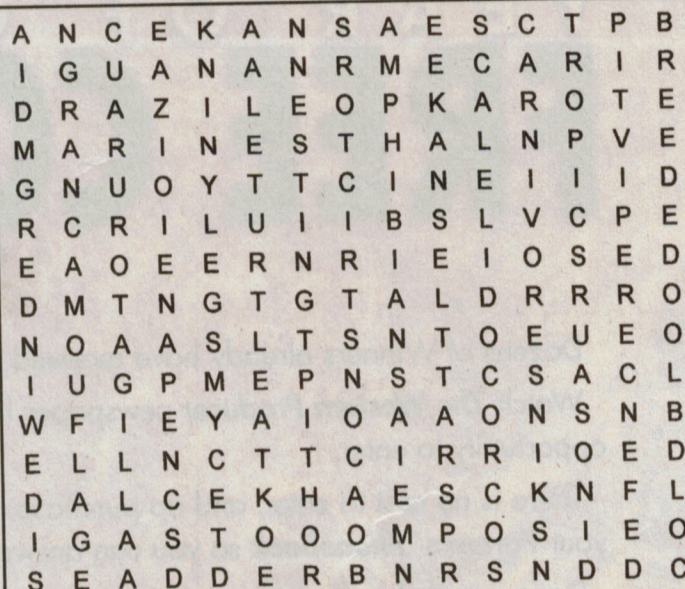
Weyburn homecoming 2000, Aug. 10-12, 2000. Friday social/gathering; Saturday dance; Sunday worship service, lunch. Please reply to: Hazeldene Evans (Hurst), 23 - 429 - 2nd St. E., Weyburn, Sask. S4H 0V4, 306-842-2648 or 306-848-3221.

Wanted: Songs: The Capture of Albert Johnson by Wilf Carter, Strawberry Roan, North to Alaska, A Little South of Norm, Johnny Dillinger song. Willing to pay. - Box 636, Naicam, Sask. S0K 2Z0.

REPTILES

Word Find puzzle
by Janice M. Peterson

When all the words in the list have been found, the letters left over will spell the solution.



Adder
Alligator
Amphibians
Boa Constrictor
Breed
Camouflage
Carnivores
Cold Blooded
Crocodile
Defence
Dinosaurs
Gecko

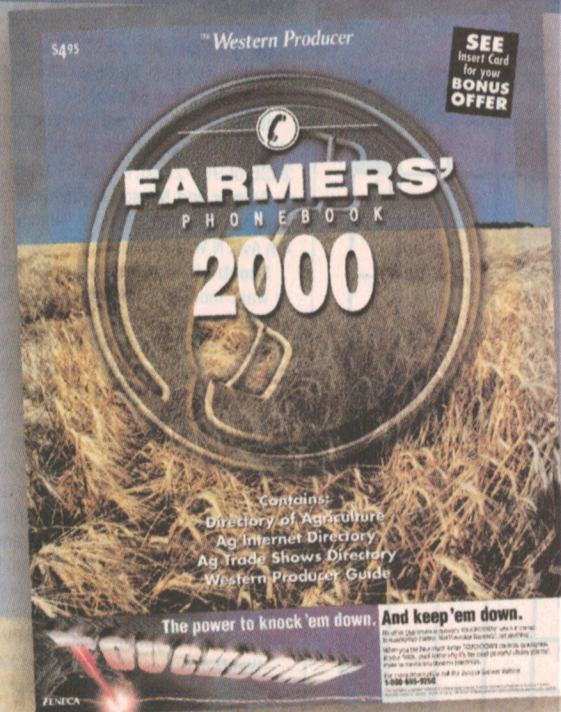
Iguana
Legs
Lizard
Marine
Matamata
Nesting
Pit Viper
Poison
Python
Rattlesnake
Scale
Sea Snake

Sidewinder
Skin
Species
Tropics
Turtle
Young

Solution
(15 letters):

Ancient
ancestor

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